

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for tracking and disseminating information concerning tools using a network-based system including a server and at least one device connected to the server via a network, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving information concerning the tool from a user via the device;

5 comparing the received product specification information with pre-stored information on tools; and

displaying information related to the tool.

2. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving tool information comprises the step of receiving information pertaining to features 10 selected by the user.

3. A method in accordance with Claim 2 wherein said step of receiving information pertaining to features selected by the user comprises the step of receiving information regarding at least one of a part name, part number, and a name of a plant that manufactures the part.

15 4. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving tool information data from a user further comprises the step of receiving a funding request for the tool.

5. A method in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said step of receiving tool information data from a user further comprises the step of receiving approval or 20 disapproval in response to a funding request for the tool.

6. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a funding request pertaining to the tool.

7. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a specification for the tool.

8. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a price for the tool.

5 9. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying information pertaining to the process by which the tool is made.

10 10. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a name of a plant where the tool is manufactured.

15 11. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a useful remaining life of the tool.

12. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a condition of the tool.

20 13. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said step of displaying information related to the tool comprises the step of displaying a quote for the tool.

14. A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the product specification information is received from the user via a graphical user interface.

25 15. A system for facilitating dissemination of information concerning a tool, said system comprising:

 a device; and

a server connected to said device and configured to receive tool product specification information data from a user via said device, said server further configured to:

5 compare the received product specification information with pre-stored tool information;

select at least one tool from the pre-stored tool information data that matches the tool identification data entered by the user; and

display to the user information related to the selected tool.

16. A system in accordance with Claim 14 wherein said server further 10 configured to receive information pertaining to features selected by the user.

17. A system in accordance with Claim 15 wherein said server further configured to receive information regarding at least one of a part name, part number, and a name of a plant that manufactures the part.

18. A system in accordance with Claim 14 wherein said server further 15 configured to receive the tool information from the user via a graphical user interface.

19. A system in accordance with Claim 14 wherein said device configured to be a server for a network of customer devices.

20. A system in accordance with Claim 14 wherein said server and said device are connected via a network.

21. A system in accordance with Claim 19 wherein said network is one 20 of a wide area network, a local area network and the Internet.